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SPRING FIELD REPORT, March-May 2017

W. Ross Silcock

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SPRING FIELD REPORT, March-May 2017

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INTRODUCTION

In general, this was a routine spring, except for remarkable numbers reported of several species, and a notable paucity of most species of wood-warblers.

A huge Snow Goose flock in the east was estimated to contain 500,000-1,000,000 birds; other notable numbers were 2000 Tree Swallows and 5000 Cliff Swallows, both record counts, 44 Black-capped Chickadees, 300 House Wrens, 62 Fox and 76 Song Sparrows on the same day at a single location, 168 Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Juncos, and 10,000 Common Grackles.

Perhaps the most notable phenomenon this spring was the dearth of migrant wood-warblers. Joel Jorgensen constructed graphics based on raw data ("crude counts") posted to eBird that showed large negative changes between 2016 and 2017 in number of individuals reported and high counts reported; high counts for 11 species declined on average an amazing 80%; the decline was consistent in magnitude for all 11 species. Jorgensen suggested this might have resulted from weather patterns that pushed migrants eastward; numbers of warblers in Iowa appeared to be normal.

Other interesting phenomena included increasing numbers of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, a Long-eared Owl nest, increasing reports of Dusky Flycatcher, and a large rather early influx of White-faced Ibis in the east.

Rarities were few, led by the long-staying Golden-crowned Sparrow in Knox Co, Nebraska's 6th, the first Panhandle record of Blue-headed Vireo, and 10th state record of Curve-billed Thrasher.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult

BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co

CBL: Capitol Beach L, Lincoln

Cem: Cemetery

CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co

Co(s): County (ies)

CSP: Chadron SP, Dawes Co

EED: Expected Early Date

ELD: Expected Late Date
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
fem: female
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar Co
ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha/Richardson Cos
imm: immature
juv: juvenile
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LNB: Lakes North and Babcock, Platte Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
LSWNP: Lincoln Saline Wetlands Nature Park, Lincoln
m.ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NLB: North Lake Basin WMA, Seward Co
NM: National Monument
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NOU: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PSP: Ponca SP, Dixon Co
Res: Reservoir
RS: Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co
RWB: Rainwater Basin, including several south-central and southeastern playa basins
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co
SHP: State Historical Park
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
SRA: State Recreation Area
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area

OBSERVERS

AB: Aaron Brees, Polk Co IA
ABo: Aaliya Booker, eBird
AF: Andrew Furman, eBird
AP: Andrew Pierson, Grand Island
BBr: Barbara Brown, eBird
BP: Brian Peterson, Omaha
BRe: Ben Ream, eBird
BSt: Barbara Straus, Lincoln
BWa: Brad Walker, eBird
BWl: Bob Willison, eBird

CAn: Chris Anderson, eBird
CGe: Callie Gesmundo, eBird
CCr: Charlotte Croshaw, Fremont
CCT: Colin Croft, eBird
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
D&JP: Don & Janis Paseka, Ames
D&MW: Donald & Marion Weidemann, eBird
DHL: David Hollie, eBird
DHo: Daniel Horton, eBird
DHu: Dylan Hubl, eBird
DMa: Danny Mag, eBird
DMg: Diane Meiborg, eBird
DMn: David Mehlman, eBird
DPa: Darrell Parsons, eBird
DSa: Dave Sandahl, eBird
DSh: Dominic Sherony, eBird
DTu: Dena Turner, eBird
DWe: Drew Weber, eBird
EHO: Eric Hough, eBird
EJa: Esa Jarvi, Lincoln
EPi: Eric Pilotte, eBird
ERa: Edward Raynor, Lincoln
GHa: Greg Hartel, eBird
GPo: Gabriel Poling, eBird
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
GWe: Garrett Wee, eBird
J&LS: Jim & Linda Swenson, eBird
JCa: John Carlini, Lincoln
JCM: Joan Campbell, eBird
JCt: John Cataldo, eBird
JFG: John F. Gatchet, eBird
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Denton
JGa: Jason Gardner, eBird
JGi: Jerry Giesecking, eBird
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JHa: JoAnne Hackos, eBird
JHi: Justin Hill, eBird
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JJD: J.J. Duerr, eBird
JJJ: Jenny Jo Johnson, eBird
JKv: John Kvarnback, eBird
JMa: Joe Manning, Omaha
JMo: Jake Mohlmann, eBird
JNi: Jonathan Nikkila, eBird
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JSc: John Schukman, eBird

JSI: John Sloane, eBird
JSS: Jason St. Sauver, Denton
JTi: Jane Tillman, eBird
JVo: Joyve Votipka, eBird
JWr: Justin Wrinn, eBird
K&HO: Ken & Helen Ostermiller, eBird
K&SJ: Kent & Sandra Jensen, eBird
KCo: Kelly Corman, eBird
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KGo: Katie Gooby, Omaha
KHa: Kadyynn Hatfield, eBird
KKa: Karen Kader, Omaha
KKi: Kelsey King, eBird
KMD: Kathy Mihm Dunning, eBird
KSc: Kathy Schwery, Plattsmouth
KWa: Kendall Watkins, eBird
L&BP: Loren & Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LBr: Lori Brummer, eBird
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LFe: Linda Ferring, eBird
LLa: Lorraine Lanning, eBird
LLe: Linda Lee, eBird
LR: Lanny Randolph, Minden
LRo: Les Roslund, eBird
M&CVD: Matthew and Cynthia Van Den Broeke, Lincoln
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MBe: Matt Beisel, Seward
MCe: Michael Cerizo, eBird
MCI: Mary Clausen, La Vista
MHa: Mace Hack, Omaha
MPo: Marne Potter, eBird
MRe: Mike Resch, eBird
MSh: Matt Shurtliff, Omaha
MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln
MW: Michael Willison, Lincoln
MWi: Matthew Winks, eBird
NA: Noah Arthur, Lincoln
NMa: Nathan Martineau, eBird
NPi: Nathan Pieplow, eBird
NVa: Nick Varvel, eBird
PDo: Patrice Domeischel, eBird
PHo: Paula Hoppe, Colon
PRo: Paul Roisen, Sioux City IA
PS: Phil Swanson, Papillion
R&CF: Robert & Claire Fortin, eBird

RD: Roger Dietrich, Yankton SD
RGr: Robert Gray, eBird
RH: Robin Harding, Minden
RMa: Robert Manning, Omaha
RMc: Regina McNulty, eBird
RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha
RSa: Rick Sammons, eBird
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln
RW: Rick Wright, Bloomfield NJ
SAb: Shanin Abreu, eBird
SKr: Steve Kruse, Lincoln
SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SMI: Simone Marler, eBird
SNe: Steven Nelson, eBird
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SSc: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
SSm: Scott Schmidt, eBird
TCz: Thomas Czubek, eBird
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TG: Tom Gannon, eBird
TJW: T.J. Walker, Milford
TTu: Tracy Tucker, eBird
VKo: Val Kollath, eBird
WBe: Wendy Becker, eBird
WF: William Flack, Kearney
VHo: Victor Haro, eBird
WKa: William Kaempfer, Boulder CO
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor IA
ZHu: Zachariah Hutchinson, eBird
ZPo: Zak Pohlen, eBird

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: The only report was of two at Memphis Lakes SRA, Saunders Co, 15 Apr (RMa, m. ob.). Of 19 Nebraska records, 16 since 2000, this is the first record for Apr. This species has occurred 9 of the last 10 years, and reports continue to increase.

Snow Goose: Best count was a remarkable estimated 500,000 -1,000,000 at BOL 2 Mar (LE), the highest eastern count on record. High counts for the state are 1,500,000-2,000,000, all in the RWB. A “massive flock” 0.25 mi. wide and 1 mi. long was near Gibbon the same day (SM).

Ross’s Goose: A rare blue morph bird was in central Nebraska 17 Mar (AB photo); this is only the 7th Nebraska record of this color morph. The 2000 in Buffalo Co 14-15 Mar (K&HO) was a good tally; high spring counts are 2250-21,920.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant central, fairly common east, rare west.

Cackling Goose: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant statewide spring migrant.

Canada Goose: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant statewide spring migrant.

Mute Swan: There were 3 reports in the Omaha area of 1-2 birds, presumably “park birds”; two at Zorinsky L 29 May (SNe) and one on the Heartland of America pond 14 and 16 May (SSm, MCE). A fourth report, also of a “park bird”, was of one in Kearney 9 Mar (BBR).

Trumpeter Swan: Migration peaks in Mar; 33 were at Swan L, Arthur Co, 30 Mar (WF). The southerly breeding site at Ravenna was occupied again this year; two were reported there 16 and 29 May (WF, JGJ). A tardy bird, likely an imm non-breeder, was photographed in Sarpy Co 28 May (RGr).

Tundra Swan: There were 2 reports of this rare migrant: a single was at RS 10-26 Mar (KD, m. ob.), and a surprising 7 at Straightwater WMA, Seward Co, 4 Apr (MUs, JG; yellow bill markings seen). Spring migrants are far fewer than in fall.

Wood Duck: A group of 65 was photographed at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 20 Mar (KGo); high counts in the east (65-100) are in the narrow period 17-24 Mar, suggesting a short migration peak.

Blue-winged Teal: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Cinnamon Teal: Recent years have seen more reports from the east; this year there were three males reported, beginning with one rather early in Butler Co 19 Mar (GR). Other singles were in Sarpy Co 6 Apr (MSH) and Saunders Co 5-9 Apr (GR, JR, BP).

Northern Shoveler: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Gadwall: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Eurasian Wigeon: None were reported of this rare spring migrant central, less-than-annual elsewhere.

American Wigeon: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Mallard: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Northern Pintail: Best count reported was 2000 at Hultine WPA, Clay Co, 12 Mar (DWe); high counts of pintails in spring are remarkable, in the range 73,000 to 200,000, and all in the short period 9-17 Mar.

Green-winged Teal: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Canvasback: One in Nemaha Co 19 May (GR) was rather late; ELDs are 21-23 May.

Redhead: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Ring-necked Duck: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Greater Scaup: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Lesser Scaup: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Bufflehead: Counts of 200 at LO 29 Apr and CLNWR 30 Apr (both JKv) were rather high; high counts are 300-1440. One in southern Sheridan Co 28 May (RW) was tardy; ELDs are 29 May-1 Jun.

Common Goldeneye: An apparent fem was rather late at LO 12 May (MW, BWi, JFG); ELDs are 17-20 May. Large numbers were at GPD; 450 were estimated present 10 (CAn) and 18 Mar (RD); the 450 is the second-highest spring tally on record after 1875.

Hooded Merganser: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Common Merganser: The 3500 at Johnson L SRA, Gosper Co, 3 Mar (TJW) was third highest spring count on record; highs are 4000-200,000.

Red-breasted Merganser: A rather late male was photographed at LO 18 May (MW, BWi, JFG); ELDs are 18-19 May. There are 9 additional later dates through 9 Jun.

Ruddy Duck: The 340 at CBL 31 Mar (LE) was a good count; highs are 548-742.

Northern Bobwhite: There were numerous reports of this species, which appears to be doing well, including westerly reports of two at Keller Park SRA, Brown Co, 16 May (KCo), one at Big Springs, Deuel Co, (WKA), and one at Ash Hollow SHP, Garden Co, 27 May (BP).

Gray Partridge: None were reported of this uncommon to rare resident in the extreme northeast. Currently the population appears to be at a low ebb.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine of this locally common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were routine of this locally common resident north of the Platte River Valley and east to a line from western Knox Co to Hall Co.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: The 5 or so disjunct populations in the southeast appear to be doing well, notably around Burchard WMA, Pawnee Co, where up to 41 were counted 7-9 Apr (MSh, GHa). At other disjunct southeast locations, singles were at SCP 4 Mar (MW) and 10 Apr (JSS), up to 16 were in southeastern Butler Co 21 Mar-17 Apr (DPa, m. ob.), and 15 were at the southeast edge of the RWB in extreme southwestern Fillmore Co 9 Apr (BP). There were no reports from the small population in Jefferson and Thayer Cos. At the southeast edge of the main range, two were heard in northern Kearney Co 9 Apr (LR, RH), and 3 flew from Hall Co to Howard Co the same day (LR, RH).

Wild Turkey: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Pied-billed Grebe: Rather early in the west were singles in southern Garden Co 18 Mar (LLe) and in Deuel Co 29 Mar (WF). EEDs in the west are 24-29 Mar.

Horned Grebe: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Red-necked Grebe: The only report was from LO; one molting into alternate plumage was there 26 Mar (JGJ). This is the 15th spring report of this species in the state; it is less-than-annual in spring.

Eared Grebe: The 240 in a "tight flock" at CLNWR 30 Apr (JKv) was a good count of migrants; highs are 392-460. A "slightly eerie nearly all-white bird" was at Ellsworth, Sheridan Co, 28 May (RW).

Western Grebe: LM is a staging area for migrants in spring and fall. Although the estimated 800 there 12 May (MW, BWi, JFG) was a good count, peak counts are 14,100-18,000 in the period 19 Apr-16 May.

Clark's Grebe: Three were reported from the LM area: singles at LeMoyne 19 Apr (WF), at Otter Creek 29 Apr (JKv photo), and on LO 12 May (MW, BWi, JFG). Two were on Enders Res, Chase Co, 14 May (MW, BWi, JFG).

Rock Pigeon: Best counts were 150 and 125 at two locations in Kearney 11-12 Mar (K&SJ); these are the second- and third-highest single location, non-CBC counts (after 200) on record.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: Now regular each year in summer, although most common in the west, a pair in Murray, Cass Co, 27 Apr-15 May (GHa photo) was easterly.

Mourning Dove: Tying second-highest count on record were the 80 at Enders Res 12 May (MW, BWi, JFG); high counts are 80-83.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west.

Black-billed Cuckoo: There were 3 reports of this currently-scarce species: one was identifiably photographed in Butler Co 21 May (BWA), and singles were reported at ICSP 19 May (BSt) and 21 May (LE).

Common Nighthawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Common Poorwill: Earliest ever for the state were two recorded in Dundey Co 8 Apr (EHO); EEDs are 22-25 Apr, but there are three earlier dates 12-18 Apr.

Chuck-will's-widow: Only one bird was reported, but it was heard by 9 birders in a happy group of NOU members at ICSP 20 May (m. ob.).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: The 14 at Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, 11 May (JG) tied the second-highest spring count; 17 is the high. One calling at Berry Bridge Campground, Cherry Co, 26 May (DHO) was the westernmost record to date in the Niobrara River Valley; there are several records 4 miles east at Smith Falls SP.

Chimney Swift: The 100 carefully counted foraging over CBL 20 May (ERa) provided the second-highest spring count on record; previous highs were 45-118.

White-throated Swift: One at Smith L WMA in central Sheridan Co 6 May (D&MW) was certainly a migrant; the easternmost known breeding location is in Beaver Valley on the Pine Ridge in northwest Sheridan Co. The Smith Lake record is the easternmost for the species in the state.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central, less-than-annual west.

Virginia Rail: One at SCP 8 Apr (JSS) was rather early and may have wintered in the area; previous EEDs were 9-12 Apr. Next report this spring was a month later, 6 May in Sheridan Co (D&MW). One at CBL 27 May (RW) may have been a tardy migrant or a potential breeder.

Sora: Arrivals were early this spring; record early was one photographed at Holmes L, Lincoln, 7 Apr that had been present for about a week (SKr). Previous EEDs were 10-14 Apr, but additional early arrivals this spring included singles at two Lancaster Co locations 11 and 12 Apr (EJa), as well as one at FF 15 Apr (PS).

American Coot: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Sandhill Crane: Rather late were two in Rock Co 21 May (JSc), and singles in York Co 21 May (WKa) and Clay Co 22 May (DHu). Previous ELDs were 20-22 May. Uncommon in the east in spring, a flock of 30 were at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 8 Mar (SKr photo), and singles, possibly the same bird, were at BOL 15 Mar (BRe) and 1 Apr (MW).

Whooping Crane: Reported numbers were moderate, with only 10-12 in all. Best count was the 3 photographed at Bulrush WMA, Clay Co, 11 Apr (JGJ).

Black-necked Stilt: Although rare in spring in the east, there were 4 reports. One was at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 7 May (MW photo, SKr photo), 1-2 were at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, 10-12 May (LE, m. ob.), one was in Butler Co 12 May (JGJ), and 1-3 were at Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Lancaster Co, 13-16 May (JCa photo, m. ob.).

American Avocet: One photographed at Hay Springs SL, Sheridan Co, 18 Mar (NVa) was earliest on record by one day.

Black-bellied Plover: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

American Golden-Plover: This species put on an amazing show this spring; Joel Jorgensen noted that this was “quickly becoming the year of the plover”. Previous high counts were 492-800, but this spring the best count was a record single-location tally of 1003 at Tamora WMA, Seward Co, 11 Apr (JGJ). Tallies at Tamora WMA were over 500 for the period 9-16 Apr (m. ob.), and the species was reported there 4 Apr-21 May (MUs, WKa). Nearby NLB also hosted large numbers, interestingly peaking a month later than at Tamora WMA at 590 on 12 May (JGJ). A field in the same vicinity hosted 657 plovers 12 May; “they are in this field every year” (JGJ). Not only were there huge numbers, but arrival was rather early as well; 8 were at LaPlatte Bottoms, Sarpy Co, 19 Mar (JMo photo, SQ); previous EEDs were 19-20 Mar.

Snowy Plover: None were reported of this rare but expected annually spring migrant central.

Semipalmated Plover: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west.

Piping Plover: A sighting in bad weather conditions at BOL 25 Mar would have been very early for this species; conflicting descriptions were provided by four observers, some features suggestive of Snowy Plover, and the report is best treated as unproven. As noted by Michael Willison, there are “no records in March of inland continental U.S. Piping Plover apart from a single central Texas report on 3/28/15”. ELDs for Nebraska are 11-13 Apr, with one earlier date 6 Apr.

Killdeer: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Mountain Plover: The only reports were from the breeding range in Kimball Co; 4 were on County Rd 14 on 24 Apr (ERa photo), and one was in the same area 14 May (MW, BWi, JFG).

Upland Sandpiper: An interesting tally of 35 Upland Sandpipers was made 1 May along a 22-mile stretch of highway between Anselmo and Dunning; apparently the birds were forced to the edge of the road by a snowfall (JKv). Previous highs were 20-70.

Whimbrel: Most records are in May, as this year, with 3 reports of singles 11-17 May (m. ob.). Flocks, however, are usually seen in mid-May (high counts 62-70, all 15-16 May), and so the 12 at LO 26 Apr (JGJ) were unexpected.

Long-billed Curlew: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant central and west, less-than-annual east.

Hudsonian Godwit: There were numerous reports, but no large aggregations were found. Usually less-than-annual in the western half of Nebraska, there were three reports: one was at North Platte SL 26 Apr (JGJ), increasing to 50 there the next day (JKv), and one was at LO 29 Apr (JKv). EEDs are 6-7 Apr, and so rather early were 3 at Tamora WMA (BP) and 6 at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, the same day (JR).

Marbled Godwit: The 70 counted in a flooded pasture in Wheeler Co 4 May (JJ) was an impressive count; highs are 94-264. Separate Marbled Godwits in and near the north end of CLNWR 27 May (RW) were in or very near the breeding range.

Ruddy Turnstone: There were 6 reports 8-19 May involving 9 birds total (m. ob.), all in the east as expected.

Stilt Sandpiper: The 650 in Butler Co 16 May (JGJ) was the 3rd-highest single location count on record. Previous highs were 620-1461. All high counts are in the period 13-18 May.

Sanderling: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Dunlin: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east and central, less-than-annual west.

Baird's Sandpiper: One in Dodge Co 10 Mar (RSa photo) was rather early; EEDs are 6-8 Mar.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant Rainwater Basin, uncommon eastward, rare westward.

Pectoral Sandpiper: In spring this species is rare west of a line from Phelps Co to Holt Co; there are only 34 such records in all. This spring 6 were in Sheridan Co 28 May (J&LS) and one was in Box Butte Co 29 May (JGJ). Westerly were 8 in Buffalo Co 5 May (AF) and 4 in Rock Co 21 May (JSc).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Less common westerly, a good tally was the 190 at LO on 29 Apr (JKv); previous highs for the west were 140-227.

Western Sandpiper: The only report of this rare statewide spring migrant was of one attaining breeding plumage at LO 29 Apr (JKv).

Short-billed Dowitcher: In Nebraska, this species is almost exclusively a May migrant, with EEDs 25-27 Apr and ELDs 30 May-2 Jun. This spring, reports pushed these limits: one was well-described at North Platte SL, Lincoln Co, 28 Apr (DSH), and another was reported without details in Holt Co 29 May (PRo).

Long-billed Dowitcher: The 650 carefully counted at North Platte SL 28 Apr (DSH) was a good tally; spring highs at single locations are from the RWB in the range 1377-3257.

American Woodcock: Rather early was one in Douglas Co 3 Mar (SMA); EEDs are 21-22 Feb.

Wilson's Snipe: EEDs where wintering does not occur are 12-14 Mar; earlier dates reported this spring in the southeast were 5 Mar at Little Blue WMA, Thayer Co, (GR), 8 Mar at BOL (RSt), and 1-2 at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, 11 Mar (BP, TG).

Spotted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Solitary Sandpiper: There were two rather late reports: singles were in Custer Co 28 May (TJW) and Lancaster Co 30 May (LE). Previous ELDs were 26-29 May.

Lesser Yellowlegs: The 300 at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, 8 and 9 Apr (JR, JGJ) was a good count; spring highs are from the RWB in the range 500-1812. Two at L Wanahoo 11 Mar (BP) were rather early; EEDs are 7-9 Mar.

Willet: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west and central, uncommon east.

Greater Yellowlegs: One at RS 2-4 Mar (JSS, RSa photo) was rather early; previous EEDs were 1-3 Mar.

Wilson's Phalarope: Reports were routine of this abundant spring migrant central and west, common east.

Red-necked Phalarope: This species is rare in the east in spring, with only about 35 records in all. This spring there were two: 8 were in Nuckolls Co 23 May (NPi photo), 1-5 were at LSWNP 18-28 May (DHI, m. ob.).

Bonaparte's Gull: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Laughing Gull: An apparently-molting one-year-old at Enders Res, Chase Co, 12-13 May (MW, BWi, JFG) provided the 27th record for the state, all but two in the period 2 Apr-28 Oct.

Franklin's Gull: The 6000 at BOL 27 Apr (MW) was impressive, although highs for spring are 12,592-20,000.

Ring-billed Gull: The 9000 at BOL 11 Mar (MW) was also impressive, although highs for spring are 19,000-30,000.

California Gull: This fairly common westerly spring migrant was reported twice: two were at Johnson L SRA, Gosper Co, 3 Mar (TJW), and at least 3 different birds were in the LM area 10 Mar-27 May (WKa, JGJ, LKv, BP).

Herring Gull: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant.

Thayer's Gull: A typical spring showing included at least two at LM 10 Mar-8 Apr (WKa, m. ob.) and singles at BOL 21 Mar (LE) and CBL 25 Mar (MW photo). A surprise to many, however, was the merger of Thayer's Gull with Iceland Gull (<http://blog.aba.org/2017/07/2017-aos-supplement.html>), the merged species forming a cline in color from dark in the western US (former Thayer's Gull) to pale in the eastern US (Iceland Gull). Birds in the middle part of the cline have been generally referred to as Kumlien's Gull. Nebraska appears to be located somewhat west of mid-cline, as few pale birds are reported (see next species).

Iceland Gull: Related to the comments under Thayer's Gull, a very pale individual was photographed at LO 26 Mar (JGJ, LLa); it was thought to be pale enough to be "on the Kumlien's side of things" (JGJ). It is the 10th spring record of Kumlien's Gull for Nebraska.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Reports would have been routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant except for a good count of 5 of mixed ages at LM 4 Apr (NA). Spring highs currently are 5-6.

Glaucous Gull: One that lingered at LO through 8 Apr (WBe photo, m. ob.) was rather late; ELDs are 11-13 Apr.

Great Black-backed Gull: This species is on the verge of annual occurrence in Nebraska; the 16th spring record was of one photographed at Calamus Res, Garfield Co, 25 Mar (RMc). There about 40 records in all for Nebraska.

Least Tern: The 14 on the Missouri River in Dixon Co 19 May (MRe) was second-highest spring count on record. Previous highs were 11-35.

Caspian Tern: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Black Tern: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Common Tern: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Forster's Tern: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Common Loon: This species arrived early and put on a good showing at BOL. Two that arrived there 18 Mar (MW) were 3rd-earliest on record by 7 days; EEDs in the east are 21-22 Mar. The 15 at BOL 18 May (LE) were a record spring count by one.

Neotropic Cormorant: Singles at BOL 21 Mar-14 May (LE, m.ob.) and LO 4 Apr (NA) were the 20th and 21st documented records for the state; they were also rather early, the 2nd and 4th-earliest on record.

Double-crested Cormorant: Huge numbers were at BOL; counts were over 1000 during the period 8-27 Apr, with an amazing spring record count of 6000 on 15 Apr (MW). Rather early was one at Johnson L, Gosper Co, 3 Mar (TJW); EEDs are 27 Feb-2 Mar.

Anhinga: Nebraska's 4th spring and 5th overall was one photographed at Swan Creek WMA, Saline Co, 18 May (WF).

American White Pelican: Spring high counts are 2000-2700, and so large numbers are expected. There were two estimates by different observers at Calamus Res, Loup Co, 25 Mar of 1000 and 4000 (DMg, JJD); averaging these suggests very roughly that 2500 might have been present.

American Bittern: One at Father Hupp WMA, Thayer Co, 28 May (CNK) was at an extreme southern breeding location in the RWB.

Least Bittern: The only report was of one at a Dodge Co farm pond 30 May (D&JP, GR, JJ).

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Great Egret: Rare in the Panhandle in spring, the only report there was of one in southeast Garden Co 26 Apr (JGJ); this is only the 34th Panhandle spring record.

Snowy Egret: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Little Blue Heron: The only report of this uncommon spring migrant east and central, less-than-annual west, was of an ad photographed in Hall Co 11 May (DMn, MHa).

Cattle Egret: Rare in the Panhandle in spring, two were near Oshkosh, Garden Co, 24 Apr (Jct), and five were just north of CLNWR 29 May (RW).

Green Heron: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east and south-central, uncommon north-central, less-than-annual Panhandle.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Three ads at Holmes L, Lincoln, 27 Mar (LE) were 3rd-earliest on record after 19 and 25 Mar; previous EEDs were 29 Mar-2 Apr.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: None were reported of this rare spring migrant southeast, less-than-annual elsewhere.

Glossy Ibis: Since this species has become an annual uncommon statewide spring migrant, the three reports this spring might be considered routine. Singles were at Wilkinson WMA, Platte Co, 8 May (Sma photo), at Lakeside, Sheridan Co, 17 May (MW, BWi, JFG), and at Whitman, Grant Co, 29 May (RW).

White-faced Ibis: There was an amazing influx in the southeast on 9 Apr, where the species is least expected during spring migration. Among the total of 285 birds reported at 8 sites, the best single-location count was 98, at Straightwater WMA, Seward Co, (ERa, MW). The date is also rather early; EEDs are 8-9 Apr. Spring high counts at single locations for the state are 150-400, and so the 200 at North Platte SL 27 Apr (DSH) and 150 at CLNWR 30 Apr (JKv) were significant.

Turkey Vulture: The 70 at BOL 10 May (MW, BWi, JFG) was a good count; spring highs are 80-150.

Osprey: Third-earliest on record was one in Douglas Co 17 Mar (JMo); EEDs are 19-22 Mar.

Mississippi Kite: Reports are increasing in the east: two were in an Omaha neighborhood 8-9 May (Sma photo), and one was seen briefly near Brownville 20 May (PRo). Westward, at least two were in the traditional Ogallala location by 12 May (MW, BWi, JFG), and at relatively recent breeding locations, 3 were in North Platte 31 May (JGJ) and two were in Benkelman 13 May (MW, BWi, JFG).

Bald Eagle: Calamus Res, Loup Co, continued its mid-Mar propensity to attract huge numbers of Bald Eagles to fish kills; 500 were estimated there 18 Mar (JHk). High count for the state is 800, also at Calamus Res.

Northern Harrier: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: ELDs are 28 May-1 Jun; one in Dawes Co 28 May (J&LS) was tardy but perhaps not unexpectedly so at that location, but one in Lancaster Co the same day (MW) was a rarity there.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common, locally common, statewide spring migrant.

Northern Goshawk: None were reported of this rare statewide spring migrant.

Red-shouldered Hawk: None were reported of this rare spring migrant east, less-than-annual elsewhere.

Broad-winged Hawk: Westerly reports continue to increase; this spring there were 4 reports from the Panhandle, bringing the total there to 32 in all, about half of these since 2000. This spring's reports were of one at CLNWR 30 Apr (JKv), one at Ash Hollow SHP, Garden Co, 4 Apr (LBr), singles at CSP 17, 28, and 30 May (MW, BWi, JFG, RW, JGJ photo), and one at a location in Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co, 28 May (BP) that has been frequented in previous years.

Swainson's Hawk: The 56 on 15 Apr at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, (PHo) was a good count; spring highs are 96-300, all in the narrow window 17-21 Apr.

Red-tailed (Krider's) Hawk: One was photographed in Johnson Co 2 May (JCa, SSc). This form winters in very low numbers in southeast Nebraska; the few records suggest later departure in spring than for western dark birds (*Buteo jamaicensis calurus* and *B. j. harlani*).



Red-tailed (Krider's form) Hawk was photographed by John Carlini in Johnson Co 2 May 2017. Visible are the black spotted malar, banded black-white tail, and white head.

Red-tailed (Western Red-tailed) Hawk: One in Scotts Bluff Co 25 Apr (SMI) was tardy; ELDs are 10 Apr (three times). Westernmost breeding Red-tailed Hawks include a few intergrades with dark western birds, but the latter are

rare as breeding birds east of the Rockies (Wheeler, Raptors of Western N. Am.).

Red-tailed (Harlan's) Hawk: One in Lancaster Co 16 Apr (MW photo) was rather late; ELDs for this form are 17-20 Apr.

Rough-legged Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Ferruginous Hawk: Reports were routine of this uncommon spring migrant west and central, less-than-annual east.

Golden Eagle: Easternmost was an imm in Hall Co 7 Apr (R&CF photo).

Barn Owl: One heard in Buffalo Co 11 Mar (CAn) was rather early; previous EEDs were 10-13 Mar.

Eastern Screech-Owl: Reports were routine of this common resident east and central, uncommon west.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Snowy Owl: None were reported of this rare, occasionally common, statewide winter visitor. ELDs are 26 Mar-1 Apr.

Burrowing Owl: Easterly was one in Buffalo Co 12 May (AF), and two were at the disjunct RWB population at Hultine WMA, Clay Co, 15 May (SKr).

Barred Owl: This species continues to push its western range limits, most noticeably this spring near and south of the Platte River Valley. Oddly, there are few records in the Platte River Valley itself west of Platte Co, although it occurs farther west in the Loup drainage. Other than one Polk Co record, there are a few for Hall Co, which may be birds moving north from the Big Blue River drainage. This spring, westerly Platte River Valley reports were from Whitetail WMA, Colfax Co, 22 May (BWa) and at Hormel Park, Dodge Co, 27 Apr (GR). Moving south, records from westerly tributaries of the Big Blue River included singles on the West Fork of the Big Blue near McCool Junction, York Co, 20 Apr (WF) and in southeastern York Co 6 May (WF). In Seward Co, on the main stem Big Blue River, one was just northeast of Seward on Plum Creek 6 Apr (GPo).

Long-eared Owl: Good news was of two attending a nest in Loup Co, first noted 19 Mar (PDo), a rather early date for incubation, and seen by several (JTi photo; m. ob.).

Short-eared Owl: There were 3 reports: two were in Platte Co 10 Mar (K&SJ), probably wintering there, and reports from likely breeding areas were of one at Clear Creek WMA, Garden Co, 4 May (LBr) and two at CLNWR 6 May (LBr).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Although several calling birds were reported in Feb, none were reported during the Spring Period. No doubt this will change in the Summer Report.

Belted Kingfisher: Non-routine reports of this species are rare; this spring, however, courtship was observed near an apparent nest hole along the Platte River in northwest Hamilton Co 23 Apr (LE). This may be on the early side, as earliest known egg date for Nebraska (minimal data) is 24 May. Peak migration occurs in mid- to late April; 7 birds, including "three pairs" were at BOL 27 Apr (TG). High spring counts are 5-7.

Lewis's Woodpecker: The only sighting of this uncommon western migrant was of one at Harrison, Sioux Co, 25 May, reported on eBird. It nests in the Black Hills and less-than-annually in Nebraska; a current breeding location is just north of Harrison at the north end of Sowbelly Canyon.

Red-headed Woodpecker: A bit early for the location were two in Howard Co 9 Apr (JCM); EEDs of non-wintering birds in east are 12-15 Apr.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Like Barred Owl, this species continues to push its western limits in several drainages. In the southwest, in Dundee Co, one was on the Republican River at Haigler 8 Apr (EHO), in Chase Co on Frenchman Creek at Enders Res 21 May (JGa) and 1-2 at Champion 11 and 14 May (WKA, MW, BWi, JFG), and in Perkins Co one at Grant 14 May (JFG). In Deuel Co, one was along the South Platte River 29 May (ZHu). In southeast Logan Co along the South Loup River one was found 27 May (WF) and another a bit farther east the same day (WF). In Hooker Co a nest was found along the Middle Loup River at Highway 97 on 31 May (DSa).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: One in Omaha 28 Apr (JR) was rather late; ELDs are 1 May (3 times).

Downy Woodpecker: Best tallies were the 17 at FF 1 Apr (JR) and 12 in Cass Co 3 Apr (KSc), second- and third-highest spring counts on record after the high of 25.

Hairy Woodpecker: The 12 at FF 1 Apr (JR) was highest spring count on record; previous highs were 5-11.

Northern Flicker: Best count was a group of 34 at LSWNP 24 Mar (LE); previous highs were 31-50. Peak migration is 19 Mar-24 Apr. The 29 at DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, 6 May (BP) was a good count also. Last 'Red-shafted' Flickers in the eastern half of the state were very late singles in Hall Co 13 May (KKi) and Buffalo Co 17 May (KWA), and another in Dodge Co 15 Apr (GR). Previous ELDs for this form were 8-13 Apr.

Pileated Woodpecker: Most reports were from ICSP and FF, with high counts at each 3 and 4 respectively (m. ob.). Unexpected locations were Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, singles on 5 Mar (KKa) and 21 May (SSm) and Schramm SP, two each on 4 (DMa) and 11 Mar (JGJ). This species continues to expand its range, albeit slowly.

American Kestrel: A dead chick was found at a known nest site on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus 31 May (TEL); this date is about in the middle of the expected nestling period 6 May through mid-Aug, although double-brooding has occurred in Nebraska.

Merlin: One of the taiga breeding race *Falco columbarius columbarius* was photographed in Lancaster Co 20 May 2017 (MW), a late date for this subspecies; previous last dates for *F. c. columbarius* were 2-3 May. Another, unidentified to subspecies, was rather late 25 May at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, (DHo). ELDs for the species are 23-25 May.

Peregrine Falcon: Reports were as expected in two categories: migrants, and residents in Lincoln and Omaha (m. ob.).

Prairie Falcon: Unlike most winters, the easternmost sighting only reached as far east as Seward Co, where one was found 8 May (RSt). ELDs are 30 Apr-1 May in the east, but there are a few later dates.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: This species is rare as far west as the Panhandle; single birds were seen at Winship Park, Gordon, Sheridan Co, 15 and 25 May (D&MW) and Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co, 30 May (RW). Also westerly was one just east of Clear Creek Marshes in extreme western Keith Co 9 May (ZPo, CGe).

Western Wood-Pewee: One at CSP 3 May (TJW) was rather early; EEDs are 6-7 May. There are now 5 earlier dates 20 Apr-3 May. Easternmost were two at Lemoyne, Keith Co, 20 May (NA photos), near the eastern edge of the species' North Platte River Valley range.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: The 13 at FF 31 May (EPi) and 11 at a location in Cass Co 24 May (KSc) were good counts; previous highs were 11-20. This species' breeding range extends westward in several riparian corridors; westerly reports of presumed migrants west of the breeding range were of singles on a weak Beaver Creek tributary in Wheeler Co 29 May (PRo), on the South Loup River near Arnold, Custer Co, 27 May (WF), and on a weak Turkey Creek tributary in Fillmore Co 24 May (JVo).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Observers are reporting this rare eastern spring migrant more frequently as identification criteria are recognized. There were reports, most with photos, of at least 6 individuals in Lancaster, Douglas, and Sarpy Cos 10-31 May (m. ob.).

Acadian Flycatcher: All but one of the reports were from the three known summering locations for the species, ICSP, FF, and WP (m. ob.). Away from these locations, migrants are rarely detected, but one was at Rulo Bluffs Preserve, Richardson Co, 11 May (MHa, RS).

Alder Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern spring migrant.

Willow Flycatcher: One at Valentine NWR 7 May (D&MW) was rather early; previous EEDs were 5-9 May.

Least Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Dusky Flycatcher: As observers become more familiar with empids, records are accumulating that are confirming and adding to our knowledge of their distribution and timing in the state, especially in the west. Prior to this spring, this species was considered less-than-annual as a migrant, the 7 documented records limited to Kimball and Scotts Bluff Cos 9 May-15 Jun. This spring, experienced observers (MW, BWi, JFG) documented 3 encounters, with photos of two of the sightings and good details on the other. One was at Rock Creek SRA, Dundy Co, 13 May, one at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 15 May, and a surprising 4 were at CSP 17 May.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: Rarely seen in migration, the two reports were near or on the breeding grounds at Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co. One was in the canyon 15 May (MW, BWi, JFG) and another at Harrison 30 May (JGJ).

Eastern Phoebe: The 12 at Pioneers Park, Lancaster Co, 2 Apr (ERa) and 9 at FF 1 Apr (JR) were good counts; previous single-location highs were 9-12. One in Webster Co 5 Mar (GR) was rather early; previous EEDs in the south and

east were 4-6 Mar. In the north and west, EEDs were 20-24 Mar, and so one in Loup Co 19 Mar (PDo) was rather early there.

Say's Phoebe: One was easterly at Crane Trust, Hall Co, 20 Mar (SAb, MWi); previous EEDs were 18-20 Mar.

Great Crested Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east, locally common central, fairly common west.

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common western spring migrant.

Western Kingbird: The 41 near Haigler, Dundy Co, 13 May (MW, BWi, JFG) was a good count, although highs are 49-311. Rather early were 1-2 at Holmes L, Lancaster Co, 26-28 Apr (LE, SKr) and one in Lincoln Co 26 Apr (WBe photo). EEDs are 21-24 Apr.

Eastern Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: One along West Denton Road at SW 31st St. in Lancaster Co, the same location at which it was seen in 2016, was first seen 23 Apr (AP); a pair was at the location 8-29 May (m. ob.) but no evidence of nesting was forthcoming. Elsewhere, one was at Schilling WMA, Cass Co, 11 May (LBr).

Loggerhead Shrike: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Northern Shrike: One in Lancaster Co 1 Apr (TG photo) was rather late for the southeast, where ELDs are 1-3 Apr.

White-eyed Vireo: None were reported of this rare southeastern spring visitor.

Bell's Vireo: Surprisingly, the two best counts reported were westerly, where this species is uncommon in spring: 14 were at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, 25 May (DHo), and 12 at Rock Creek SRA, Dundy Co, 13 May (MW, BWi, JFG). Previous highs were 13-34. One near Denton, Lancaster Co, 12 Apr (JG) was 4th-earliest on record; EEDs in the east are 20 Apr (3 times).

Yellow-throated Vireo: The 6 at FF 13 May (JR, BP) was a good tally; highs are 6-17. Singles were westerly in Wheeler Co 29 May (PRo) and Buffalo Co 30 May (BBr).

Blue-headed Vireo: The first Panhandle record of this species was of one in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 13 May (JFG photo, MW, BWi). There are only 4 other spring records west of Grand Island, those in Harlan and Buffalo Cos.

Plumbeous Vireo: Reports were routine of this uncommon western spring migrant.

Philadelphia Vireo: Reports were routine of this uncommon spring migrant east, rare central.

Warbling Vireo: Reports of the eastern subspecies *Vireo gilvus gilvus* from Deuel Co 29 May (3; ZHu) and Garden Co 14 May (KMD) were of interest; the western subspecies *V. g. brewsteri* breeds in the Panhandle, but the area of intergradation between the two is unknown in Nebraska. It seems likely that birds in the west-central and eastern Panhandle are intergrades.

Red-eyed Vireo: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west.

Pinyon Jay: None were reported of this common but highly erratic winter visitor west, uncommon in spring.

Blue Jay: Reports were routine of this common resident and spring migrant east and central, fairly common west.

Black-billed Magpie: Reports of this beleaguered species were from expected westerly locations except for one in the east: a single was in Seward Co 13 Mar (VHo). Most recent reports in the east are during the cooler months, when a few birds may wander from the breeding range. It currently breeds in low numbers in the Platte River Valley from Buffalo Co to Polk Co. Even in the west, one observer on a statewide birding trip only found two, those in Smiley Canyon, Sioux Co, 28 May, and "that was that" (RW).

American Crow: Best count reported was the 350 along the Double Check canal in Lincoln Co 4 Mar (TJW); spring highs are 405-2490.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Purple Martin: The 57 counted at a known Benkelman colony 19 May (WKA) was an excellent count; the only higher spring "count" is of "hundreds". The 30 at LSWNP 28 May (MW) was also a good count; previous highs (other than "hundreds") were 31-40. The colony at Broken Bow, westernmost in the Loup drainage, was flourishing 28 May (RW).

Tree Swallow: Previous spring high counts of this species were 330-530; these numbers were far exceeded by counts this spring: 2000 at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, 28 Apr (JGJ), 1500 at BOL 27 Apr (MW), and 515 at CBL 29 Apr (LE).

Violet-green Swallow: One in Scotts Bluff Co 15 Apr (KD) was rather early; EEDs are 14-17 Apr.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Bank Swallow: Large numbers breed in bluffs along the Missouri River in northeast Nebraska; a good count of 115 was reported in Dixon Co 21 May (JHi). Spring highs are 195-1200.

Cliff Swallow: The 5000 at LO 12 May (MW, BWi, JFG) ties the previous high, also at LO. Previous highs were 3000-5000, and so this spring's counts of 3500 at CBL 20 May (ERa) and 3000 at a colony at highway 183 on the Niobrara River, Keya Paha Co, (KCo) were significant. Ten in Hall Co 8 Apr (BP) were rather early; EEDs are 4-6 Apr.

Barn Swallow: The 250 at BOL 27 Apr (MW) was a good count; spring highs are 302-708.

Black-capped Chickadee: The 44 at FF 1 Apr (JR) was a record non-CBC tally, probably indicative of some spring movement. Such movement occurs on occasion in this normally resident species, most noticeably in the Missouri River Valley.

Mountain Chickadee: One with a group of Black-capped Chickadees at CSP 25 May (JSS) was first heard calling and finally located among the group and adequately described. Puzzling, however, are the very late date (ELDs are 2-4 May), and the absence of reports in the preceding winter.

Tufted Titmouse: Reports in Washington Co are at the north edge of the range; of the 4 reports this spring, farthest north were two near DeSoto 19 May (BWA recording) and one singing in Blair 18-27 Mar (LFe).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: ELDs away from known breeding areas are 30-31 May, and so one in Lancaster Co 31 May (RSt) was pushing the limit. Two were in a ponderosa pine grove in Mullen, Hooker Co, 29 May where they were seen in 2016 (JGJ). This is only 40 miles from a regular breeding location, NNF Bessey, Thomas Co.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports from Scotts Bluff Co continue to increase since it was first noted there in 1994; it appears likely the species is established there. This spring, one was at the Scotts Bluff NM 31 May (JGJ), and 3 were south of Gering near the Wildcat Hills 11 May (KD). Generally, this is a sedentary species, and little is known about movements outside the breeding season, although it appears on rare occasions in winter (mid-Sep through mid-May) away from the known breeding range. Such reports may be of Nebraska breeders or birds moving into the state; this spring reports were of one on the North Loup River near Brewster, Blaine Co, 1 Mar (WF), two at a feeder at Greeley, Greeley Co, about 30 miles northeast of the North Loup River (WF), and one at Venango, Perkins Co, 29 Mar (WF).

Pygmy Nuthatch: The consolidation of Bessey NNF, Thomas Co, as a new breeding site continued with ads carrying food to a "nest somewhere in a ponderosa" 29 May (DHo). Nesting was first noted at NNF Bessey in 2014.

Brown Creeper: ELDs are 27 Apr-2 May, and so singles at FF 7 May (ERa) and 15 May (ABo) were likely members of the tiny breeding population there.

Rock Wren: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west and west-central, rare east-central, less-than-annual east.

House Wren: Huge numbers of this species were reported 6-7 May: 300 were carefully estimated at DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, 6 May (BP) and 100 were at FF 7 May (BSt). These tallies, along with the 50 at WP on 14 May (TEL) are 3 of the 4 highest single-person, single-location counts on record.

Winter Wren: One in Colfax Co 19 Mar (GR) was at the north edge of the winter range, which runs north to Washington and Colfax Cos and west to Gage Co.

Sedge Wren: Arrival dates were on the early side; EEDs are 18-20 Apr, and so noteworthy were singles at SCP 21 Apr (TG) and FF 22 Apr (JR). Westernmost was one in Wheeler Co 24 May (JJ), near the west edge of the range in Nebraska.

Marsh Wren: One at Orleans SL, Harlan Co, 19 Mar (LR, RH) and 1-4 at LSWNP 19 Mar-13 Apr (MW, M&CVDB) may have wintered at those locations; EEDs for migrants are 10-11 Apr. Regular wintering (every year) is only known in the North Platte River Valley.

Carolina Wren: The 10 at FF 1 Apr (JR) was a good count; there may be some northward movement in spring and fall. Most springs there are few outliers north and west of the expected resident range; this spring there were around 10 of these, in Cuming, Colfax. Nance, Buffalo, Adams, Nuckolls and Webster (m. ob.).

- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** The 18 at WP 11 May (MW, BWi, JFG) was a good count; spring highs are 22-45. The breeding range is split between eastern and western subspecies, the latter having established in the Panhandle in the past 20 years or so. Migrants are still rare in central Nebraska, although the eastern population has extended its summer range west to Cherry Co recently. The two reports this spring in the central away from Cherry Co are of singles in Blaine Co 27 Apr (JGJ) and in Buffalo Co 2 May (AF).
- Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** One at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 27 May (BP) was tardy; western ELDs are 29 May-4 Jun.
- Eastern Bluebird:** EEDs in the west, where wintering is rare, are 23-25 Mar, and so one at SCP 19 Mar (CGe photo, recording) was noteworthy.
- Mountain Bluebird:** Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west and west-central, rare east-central, less-than-annual east.
- Townsend's Solitaire:** Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west, uncommon central, less-than-annual east.
- Veery:** There were two reports of this rare eastern spring migrant: two were in the Brownsville Cem, Nemaha Co, 20 May (PRo), and one was at ICSP the same day (JGJ). None were reported from the west, where it is also a rare spring migrant.
- Gray-cheeked Thrush:** One at PRSP 27 Apr (SSc) was rather early; spring EEDs are 25-26 Apr.
- Swainson's Thrush:** Best tallies reported were the 34 at ICSP 11 May (SSc, WRS) and 28 on the Steamboat Trace, Otoe Co, 13 May (JGJ). Spring single-location highs are 75-150.
- Hermit Thrush:** EEDs for migrants in the east are 19-22 Mar, and so two at Schramm SP, Cass Co, 4 Mar (KHa photo) were likely wintering, which occurs rarely in the southeast. Migrants are rare in the west; singles were near Gordon, Sheridan Co, 14 May (D&MW) and 4 were at nearby Walgren L, Sheridan Co, 28 May (J&LS). Western migrants are presumably of one of the somewhat later-migrating western subspecies.
- Wood Thrush:** The 10 at FF 31 May (EPi) was a good count; EEDs are 20-23 Apr.
- American Robin:** Two counts of 500 were reported: at Schramm SP, Sarpy Co, 11 Mar (JGJ) and in southeast Lincoln Co cedar canyons 18 Mar (JR). Spring highs are 796-1200.
- Gray Catbird:** The 30 at FF 13 May (BP) was a record single-observer spring high. One at LM 6 May (TG) and another in Buffalo Co 8 May (AF) were rather early; EEDs in the central and west were 5-9 May.
- Curve-billed Thrasher:** One at CLNWR 14 May was well-documented (KMD photo, recording); this is the 10th documented record for the state, 6th since 2000.
- Brown Thrasher:** Good counts were the 23 at BOL 2 May (LE), 22 at Crane Trust, Hall Co, 13 May (KKi), and 21 at Pawnee L, Lancaster Co, 18 Apr (TG). These counts indicate peak migration occurs late Apr-early May; high single-observer count is 60. One in Scotts Bluff Co 23 Apr (KD) was rather early; EEDs in the Panhandle are 19-23 Apr.

Northern Mockingbird: One in Cass Co 3 Mar (GWe) was rather early; EEDs where not reported during winter are 2-4 Mar. Fewest numbers are in the north; singles were in Hooker Co 29 Apr (WF) and 29 May (JGJ) and at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, 25 May (DHo). One was in Dawes Co 31 May (RW) and 1-3 were at Gordon, Sheridan Co, 8 and 27 May (D&MW).

European Starling: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

House Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

American Pipit: Previous EEDs were 9-10 Mar, and so early were one in Jefferson Co 8 Mar (CNK) and 9 at NLB 9 Mar (DWe).

Sprague's Pipit: None were reported of this uncommon spring migrant central and east, less-than-annual west.

Pine Grosbeak: There was evidence of a small incursion of this species into the state this winter. A group of 8 at a Loup Co feeder 25 Mar was well-described (DMg).

House Finch: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Purple Finch: As in 2016 there were a few mid-May reports, surprising in that the ELDs are 17-19 May. Last was one at Ponca SP 21 May (JHi), record late, but only by a few days. Elsewhere, 4 were in Buffalo Co 17 May (KWa) and one was in Dodge Co 15 May (GR).

Cassin's Finch: A surprise was a singing bird at CSP 25 May, the same day as a Mountain Chickadee was reported there (JSS); occurrences of Cassin's Finch in spring and summer are highly erratic and rare.

Common Redpoll: None were reported of this uncommon winter visitor west, north and east, rare south. ELDs are 4-5 Apr.

Red Crossbill: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west, rare elsewhere.

Pine Siskin: After a winter of low numbers, few appeared in spring; only 13 were reported in all (m. ob.).

Lesser Goldfinch: This species arrives in late May, and the three reports this spring fit the pattern: two, including a green-backed male, were at WHNC 28 May (BP photo), a "blackish-backed" male was there 30 May (RW), and another green-backed male was at a Scottsbluff feeder 26 May (CCt photo).

American Goldfinch: The 100-150 at RS 11-12 Mar (CAn, m. ob.) was a good tally; spring highs are 200-300.

Lapland Longspur: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant west, uncommon central, rare east.

Smith's Longspur: EEDs for this uncommon spring migrant are 29-31 Mar, although there are earlier dates: 13 and 21 Mar (twice). The two reports this spring raise the possibility that a few might winter at SCP: one was there 4 Mar (MW) and 3 on 9 Mar (TG). There are 5 records for Feb, including 1-9 birds at SCP 21 Feb-6 Mar 2016 (MW, m. ob.). The nearest known regular wintering location is in east-central Kansas, and so all of these records may be of spring migrants.

McCown's Longspur: Two at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 16 Mar (DTu) were rather early; EEDs are 21-25 Mar, although there are 4 earlier reports 12-18 Mar.

Snow Bunting: None were reported of this uncommon statewide spring migrant; ELDs are 16-17 Mar.

Green-tailed Towhee: None were reported of this rare spring migrant west, which occurs 30 Apr-4 Jun.

Spotted Towhee: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Eastern Towhee: Counts of 16 at Pawnee L, Lancaster Co, 18 May (TG) and 15 at ICSP on 11 May (SSc, WRS) were 3rd- and 4th-highest on record for spring; previous highs were 12-24. This species is less-than-annual in winter in the extreme southeast; 1-2 at FF 5-26 Mar (BP, m. ob.) may have wintered. EEDs are 22-24 Mar. This species is a rare spring migrant away from the southeast. One in Scotts Bluff Co was singing "what sounded like an Eastern song" (KD); there have been a few reports from Scotts Bluff Co recently of phenotypic Eastern Towhees that are probably "Eastern end" intergrades with Spotted Towhee. Similar reports this spring without details were from Chase (MW, BWi, JFG), Lincoln (BWA), and Keith (JKv) Cos.

Cassin's Sparrow: The only report of this rare and erratic spring migrant was of one rather early at Enders Res, Chase Co, 20 May (JGa recording); EEDs were 21-22 May.

American Tree Sparrow: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Chipping Sparrow: One in Lancaster Co 17 Mar (M&CVDB) was rather early; EEDs are 15 Mar (3 times).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Brewer's Sparrow: There were only three reports of this uncommon western spring migrant, all in Sioux Co: one on 13 May (WF), 3 on 30 May (JGJ), and another 30 May on Henry Road (RW).

Field Sparrow: The 69 at DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, 6 May (BP) was an excellent count; spring highs are 72-133.

Vesper Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant.

Lark Sparrow: The 130 in East Ash Canyon, Dawes Co, 17 May (MW, BWi, JFG) and the 118 at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, 7 May (D&MW) were good counts; previous highs were 120-155.

Lark Bunting: Easterly migrants were 3 in Buffalo Co 8 May (AF), 2-4 at Pine Glen WMA, Brown Co, 16 May (JGJ, KCo), and one at Keller Park SRA, Brown Co, also on 16 May (KCo).

Savannah Sparrow: One at LSWNP 9 Mar (EJa) was rather early; EEDs are 9-10 Mar. The 71 in Butler Co 6 May (LE) was a good tally; spring highs were 65-250.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Henslow's Sparrow: One at SCP 18 Apr (JJJ photo) was rather early; EEDs were 20-22 Apr. Reports were from expected locations at SCP and Burchard

SRA, Pawnee Co, (m. ob.), except for two heard singing about two miles northwest of Twin Oaks WMA, Johnson Co (PRo).

LeConte's Sparrow: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east, rare central.

Nelson's Sparrow: None were reported of this rare eastern migrant; EEDs are 24 Apr-4 May.

Fox Sparrow: The amazing 62 at FF 1 Apr (JR) was by far a record spring high; previous highs were 22-25. The 22 there 5 Mar (BP) was a good count for the rather early date; EEDs are 2-3 Mar, although some overwinter in the southeast.

Song Sparrow: The 76 at FF 1 Apr (JR) was 3rd-highest spring count on record; previous highs were 65-250.

Lincoln's Sparrow: The 25 at FF 2 May (BP) was a good count; spring highs are 35-44. Overwintering is rare, even in the southeast, with only about 6 records in all 10 Jan-10 Feb. Later Feb and early Mar reports may be of undetected wintering birds, especially in the southeast, or evidence for an early push northward in some years. This spring, there were two reports on 4 Mar: singles were in Merrick Co (GR) and Lancaster Co (MW). Early and westerly was one in Dundy Co 11 Mar (WKA). Including these two records, there are still only 13 records for the state 3 Feb-8 Mar. EEDs are 16-19 Mar.

Swamp Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west. It also winters rarely in the southeast and eastern Platte River Valley to Colfax and Butler Cos.

White-throated Sparrow: One in Dawson Co 10 Apr (NMA) was rather early at that westerly location. EEDs away from wintering areas are 16-18 Apr.

Harris's Sparrow: Rare westerly, one was in Keith Co 26 Apr (JGJ).

White-crowned Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west and west-central, fairly common elsewhere.

Golden-crowned Sparrow: The wintering bird in Knox Co, Nebraska's 5th, along with its western-oriented posse (a Pink-sided Junco and at least one White-crowned Sparrow were along for the ride) must have enjoyed the seed regularly put out at the wintering stump by Mark Brogie. It lingered until 11 May and was seen by over 80 birders during its 131-day stay (MB).

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: The 168 at BOL 14 Mar (LE) was a record spring count; previous spring highs were 120-150.

Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco: There were 7 reports from across the state, through the rather late date 1 Apr in Douglas Co (DMA photo); based on as yet limited data, ELDs are 31 Mar-6 Apr.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: Reports were routine of this abundant spring migrant west, common central, uncommon east.

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: This form is poorly-documented in the eastern half of Nebraska. Apart from the bird that accompanied the Golden-crowned Sparrow in Knox Co, photographed by Michael Willison, easternmost documented records were in Hall Co 5 Apr (JCm) and at RS 14 Mar (K&HO). The Knox Co bird was last seen 20 Mar (SMA, JMA).

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: The two reports were both from an expected location, Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co; two were there 16 May (MW, BWi, JFG, photo) and one on 30 May (BP).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Reports were routine of this uncommon, locally common, spring migrant west, west-central, and in Niobrara and Missouri River Valleys east to Knox Co.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide spring migrant.

Bobolink: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Eastern Meadowlark: The 30 in Douglas Co 8 Apr (LRO) was a good count; highs are 30-40.

Western Meadowlark: Best count was 300 along Elm Island Rd, Buffalo Co, 13 Mar (RW); high spring count is 551.

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Bullock's Oriole: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant west and extreme west-central.

Baltimore Oriole: EEDs are 22-25 Apr, and so noteworthy were singles in Buffalo Co 22 Apr (JNi photo) and in Cass Co 24 Apr (KSc). Also rather early in the east were singles in Sarpy (MSh) and Douglas (BP) Cos 27 Apr, and, westerly, 9 May in Keith Co (ZPo, CGe); EEDs in the west are 7-9 May.

Red-winged Blackbird: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Brown-headed Cowbird: One in Scotts Bluff Co 8 Apr (KD) was rather early; EEDs in the Panhandle are 8-9 Apr.

Rusty Blackbird: Two in Merrick Co 4 Mar (GR) were at the west edge of the expected winter range and thus rather early; EEDs north and west of the winter range are 21-23 Mar.

Brewer's Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west and central, uncommon east.

Common Grackle: Second-highest spring count (estimate?) on record was the 10,000 near Raymond 27 Mar (MBe); high was an actual count of 11,222, also in Lancaster Co.

Great-tailed Grackle: The 160 near 84th and Fletcher in Lincoln 6 Mar (M&CVDB) was a good count; spring highs are 200-525.

Ovenbird: One in Hooker Co 29 May (JGJ) was a rather late migrant; previous ELDs away from known breeding areas were 26 May-2 Jun. At nearby NNF Bessey, Thomas Co, 8 were counted 29 May 2017 (DHo); this, along with good numbers there in the nesting season beginning in 2014 is suggestive of nesting, but so far this has not been confirmed.

Worm-eating Warbler: This less-than-annual spring visitor was photographed at Heron Haven, Douglas Co, 10 May (KKa). There have been few records in recent years, none on eBird.



This amazing photograph of a Worm-eating Warbler was taken by Karen Kader at Heron Haven, Omaha, 10 May 2017. Recent years have seen less-than-annual reports in Nebraska of this species.

Louisiana Waterthrush: Arrival was rather early: singles were at FF 1 Apr (JR), Pioneers Park, Lincoln, 2 Apr (ERa), and PRSP 2 Apr (2; SSc). EEDs are 29-30 Mar. Reports (m. ob.) were from known major sites at ICSP, PRSP, FF, Neale Woods, Canyon Rd in NE Douglas Co, and WP. Reports also came from Steamboat Trace in Nemaha Co, where the species has now been seen three years running (JGJ), as well as newly-detected sites with suitable habitat at the I-80 rest area just west of Exit 426, Cass Co, 16 and 27 Apr (TCz, SSc recording), and possibly Mahoney SP, Sarpy Co, 26 Apr (SSc). One was at Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, 15 Apr (MW, ERa) near where one was found in 2015 (MW).

Northern Waterthrush: One at Towl Park, Omaha, 19 Apr (BP) was early; EEDs were 20-22 Apr.

Golden-winged Warbler: There were about 8 of this rare spring migrant reported (m. ob.); westerly was one at RS 17 May (KWa photo).

Blue-winged Warbler: None of this rare eastern spring visitor were reported.

Black-and-white Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Prothonotary Warbler: All but two of the 20 reports of this rare spring migrant were from FF, where it uses nest boxes (m. ob.). The exceptions were one at PSP 8 May (JSI) and two at ICSP, Richardson Co, 13 May (SQ).

Tennessee Warbler: Rare but annual in the Panhandle, there were two reports this spring: one was at CSP 17 May (MW, BWi, JFG), and two were at Hay Springs, Sheridan Co, 27 May (NVa).

Orange-crowned Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Nashville Warbler: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east, uncommon central.

Connecticut Warbler: None were reported of this rare eastern spring migrant.

MacGillivray's Warbler: The only report of this uncommon western spring migrant was of one singing at CSP 30 May (JGJ).

Mourning Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central.

Kentucky Warbler: One at Towl Park, Omaha, was rather early 1 May (BP, JR); EEDs are 28-29 Apr.

Common Yellowthroat: One in Thayer Co 17 Apr (JGJ) was rather early; previous EEDs were 15-18 Apr.

Hooded Warbler: The only report was of one without documentary details at PSP 8 May. This species is rare but annual in the east.

American Redstart: Best count this spring was an excellent 60, second-highest on record after 100, at FF 21 May (MW, BWi, JFG); 40 were there 13 May (MCI).

Cape May Warbler: The only report of this less-than-annual statewide spring migrant was of one photographed and recorded at Mercer Woods, Omaha, 17 May (JR).

Cerulean Warbler: One at ICSP 11 May did not meet documentary standards for validation. It was singing a stepwise buzzy song, but without introductory chip notes; the observer was unable to get a recording. No others were reported.

Northern Parula: Less-than-annual in the Panhandle, and rare west-central, a surprise was one westerly at Rock Creek SRA, Dundy Co, 13 May (MW, BWi, JFG).

Magnolia Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central.

Bay-breasted Warbler: The only report of this rare eastern spring migrant was in Omaha 13-15 May (LBI).

Blackburnian Warbler: Only 7 were reported (m. ob.) of this uncommon eastern spring migrant.

Yellow Warbler: Coverage of 6000 acres of Crane Trust land in Hall Co 13 May yielded 62 Yellow Warblers (KKi).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east, uncommon central.

Blackpoll Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west.

Palm Warbler: EEDs are 14-16 Apr, and so rather early were one at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 20 Apr (LE) and two at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, the same day (BP photo).

Pine Warbler: Surprisingly, there were three reports of this less-than-annual spring migrant. Singles were in a Lincoln yard 25-26 Mar (M&CVDB photo, MW, ERa), in an Arbor Lodge SHP, Nebraska City, pine grove 18 Apr (JGi), and in Sarpy Co 11 May (MCe photo).



This Pine Warbler was photographed by Matthew and Cynthia Van Den Broeke in Lincoln, Lancaster Co, 25 Mar 2017. This cold-tolerant wood-warbler is of less-than-annual occurrence in Nebraska.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: This form occurs in spring quite far east; this spring, easternmost were one at Dead Timber SRA, Dodge Co, 3 May (JGJ) and in Buffalo Co 24 Apr (JWr) and 4 May (AF).

Yellow-throated Warbler: As usual, the reports were from known sites, FF and Neale Woods' Krimlovski Tract in southeast Washington Co (m. ob.). Strangely, there are virtually no records from ICSP. This spring, one was rather early at FF 9 Apr (JR); EEDs are 5-8 Apr. One just west of Fort Calhoun, Washington Co, 7 May was identified by an observer from Indiana familiar with the song (MPo).

Black-throated Green Warbler: There were only 4 reports of this uncommon easterly spring migrant: singles were in a Papillion yard 5 May (PS), an Omaha yard 9 May (SMA), a Bellevue yard 11 May (L&BP), and at Hormel Park, Fremont, Dodge Co, 15 May (GR).

Canada Warbler: Although a rare eastern spring migrant, usually there are a few records; this spring, however, there was only one, in Rock Co, 31 May (PRo).

Wilson's Warbler: One in Red Willow Co 15 May (m. ob.) was early; EEDs are 20-21 Apr, although there are three undocumented reports 14-17 Apr.

Summer Tanager: Migrants occur somewhat north and west of the summer range; an apparent yearling male was in Fremont, Dodge Co, 19-21 May (CCR photo). Lancaster Co is at the west edge of the summer range, but reports from there are increasing; singles were at WP 20 May (TEL) and BOL 29 May (EJa).

Scarlet Tanager: The 7 at PRSP 12 May (JGJ) was a good count; previous spring highs were 7-9.

Western Tanager: Reports were routine of this uncommon spring migrant west and west-central.

Northern Cardinal: Good counts were the 30 at FF 13 Apr (BP) and 26 at PL 18 Apr (TG). Spring highs are 40-42. Slow expansion of the range westward continues; there were several reports from locations at the west edge of the range in various drainages. Two reports were not closely associated with drainages: three were in Arthur, Arthur Co, 30 Mar (WF) and one was at Laing Park, Alliance, Box Butte Co, 27 May (NVa). Otherwise, in the North Loup River drainage, one was along Goose Creek, at Elsmere, southeast Cherry Co, 28 Apr (WF), two were at Valentine NWR 25 May (DHo), and singles were on the Dismal River in Hooker Co at Shimmins L 26 Mar (JGJ) and at the Highway 97 crossing the same day (JGJ). Cardinals have reached the west end of Nebraska, with three at Stateline Island, North Platte NWR, 30 Apr (KD).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east, fairly common central, rare west.

Black-headed Grosbeak: Less-than-annual in the east, but just barely, this species has occurred there in 9 of the years 2007-2017. This year, an alternate-plumaged male was at PL 20 May (MW photo, BWi).

Blue Grosbeak: The 6 at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 29 May (J&LS) was a good count; highs are 7-11.

Lazuli Bunting: As with Black-headed Grosbeak, this species has occurred eastward with increasing regularity in recent years. It is now of annual occurrence in the east in spring, with three reports this year: singles were at Greenwood,

Cass Co, 20 May (J&LS) and at PL 21 May (ERa). The third, a male in Nuckolls Co 30 Apr (TTu), was rather early; EEDs are 25-27 Apr.

Indigo Bunting: The 35 at FF 21 May (MW, BWi, JFG) was a good count; previous highs were 27-45. One in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 29 May (BP) was the only Panhandle report; this species is rare in spring in the Panhandle. The hybrid zone with Lazuli Bunting is just east of the east edge of the Panhandle.

Dickcissel: No details were provided for a very early bird in Douglas Co 8 Apr (VKo). EEDs in the southeast are 15-18 Apr, although this species has been known to occur on a few occasions in winter months.

Greater Sandhill Crane (*Antigone canadensis tabida*) Copulation Detected Along the Big Bend of the Platte River, South-Central Nebraska

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On 9 March 2017 at 0805 hrs, two *A. canadensis tabida* were observed copulating on a sandy island within the south channel of the Platte River, Hall County, Nebraska (40.790982°N, -98.404635°W, WGS84; 581 m elev.). Two biologists witnessed the copulation at a distance of about 175 m looking to the south from within an overnight viewing blind on the north bank of the south channel of the Platte River, utilizing an 80 mm spotting scope (20x60x magnification).

The sequence of events previous to the copulation followed very closely the observations reported by Tacha (1988). The copulation was preceded by the male holding the “bill up” display pointing its neck and bill in a straight line at approximately 45° to the body (Tacha 1988). The male initiated this behavior and held it longer, but the female also completed a “bill up” display previous to copulation. The male then paced around the female, she flattened her back and opened her wings partially, providing a spot for the male to land on top of her and place his feet atop her scapulars. Following this, the pair made a series of cloacal contacts with mounting lasting approximately 8 to 10 seconds. As Tacha (1988)